

Remarks

Claims 1-10 and 21-40 are pending in this application. In the final Office Action dated November 14, 2003, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 5, 8, 9, 21, 22, 24, 27-29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 38 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,314,227 to Eventoff (Eventoff). The Examiner rejected claims 2, 10, 23, 30 and 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eventoff in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,121,869 to Burgess (Burgess) or U.S. Patent No. 6,531,951 to Serban *et al.* (Serban). The Examiner rejected claims 4, 23 and 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eventoff in view of Serban. The Examiner rejected claims 6, 7, 25, 26, 36 and 37 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eventoff in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,087,925 to DeVolpi (DeVolpi). Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiners rejections and reconsideration is requested in light of the following arguments.

Independent claim 1 provides an electronic pressure sensitive transducer producing an electrical signal indicative of applied pressure. The transducer includes a printed circuit board accepting electronic elements for processing the transducer electrical signal. Conductive traces are formed on the printed circuit board to define a contact area. A flexible substrate having an inner surface is positioned over the contact area. An adhesive spacer substantially surrounds the contact area for attaching the flexible substrate to the printed circuit board. At least one resistive layer is deposited on the flexible substrate inner surface so as to contact at least two of the traces in response to pressure applied to the flexible substrate and thereby produce the electrical signal indicative of applied pressure.

Claim 1 provides for an adhesive spacer attaching the flexible substrate to the printed circuit board. As illustrated in Figure 1, adhesive spacer 34 is sufficiently thick to provide spacing. This is further explained in the specification on page 7, lines 25-27, as follows:

Adhesive 34 is used to attach flexible substrate 28 to printed circuit board 22. Adhesive 34 also provides spacing between resistive layers 32 on substrate 28 and traces 24 on printed circuit board 22.

In rejecting claim 1, the Examiner identified Eventoff's glue as Applicants' adhesive spacer. Eventoff discloses glue for attaching insulative spacer member (18) to cover (19). The Examiner identifies Eventoff's spacer member as Applicants' pedestal, which is not an element of claim 1. However, Eventoff neither teaches or suggests that the glue used to attach the cover to the spacer member itself has any spacing property. Nor is any spacing provided by the glue shown in Eventoff's figures.

Independent claim 21 provides a printed circuit board electronic pressure sensitive transducer assembly including, *inter alia*, an adhesive spacer attaching a flexible substrate to the printed circuit board. The Examiner rejected claim 21 with the same argument as claim 1, that Eventoff's glue is an adhesive spacer. Eventoff neither teaches nor suggests an adhesive spacer.

Independent claim 31 provides a printed circuit board electronic pressure sensitive transducer assembly including, *inter alia*, a pedestal substantially surrounding a contact area forming a flat area higher than conductive traces and an adhesive spacer attaching a flexible substrate to the pedestal. The Examiner rejected claim 31 using the same argument as claim 1. However, the spacing in Eventoff appears to be entirely due to Eventoff's insulative spacer (18) and not to the glue attaching the insulative spacer and cover (19).

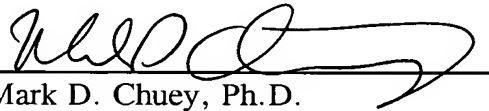
Claim 5, which depends from claim 1, further provides that the plurality of conductive traces includes a plurality of sets of traces, each set of traces interconnected within a zone of the contact area, and an interconnected set of common traces extending into each zone. This discloses a system with at least three sets of traces, one common set and at least two additional sets, each within a zone of the contact area. The Examiner rejected claim 5 as anticipated by Eventoff. However, Eventoff discloses a single pair of traces within a single contact zone. Thus, Eventoff does not teach claim 5. Dependent claims 24 and 35 include similar limitations and are also patentable.

Claims 1-10 and 21-40 meet all substantive requirements for patentability. Applicants therefore respectfully request that this case be passed to issuance. No fee is believed due by filing this paper. However, any fee due may be withdrawn from Deposit Account No. 02-3978 as specified in the Application Transmittal.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to discuss any issue related to this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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